

LAND AT GREEN END ROAD, GREAT BARFORD

Bedford Borough Local Plan Review 2020



Local Plan Review

Have Your Say on the Future of Your Borough

12 August 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Optimis Consulting has prepared this supporting evidence on behalf of our client who owns the land at Green End Road, Great Barford. This supporting evidence responds to the Bedford Borough Local Plan Review 2020 and the submission of land at Green End Road, Great Barford under the Call for Sites Exercise.
- 1.2. The supporting evidence is accompanied with the following appendix:
 - Appendix 1 Site Location Plan
- 1.3. The site is approximately 0.7ha in size and could deliver up to 20 residential dwellings alongside associated community benefits. Optimis views it as a suitable, available, and achievable site for residential development and advocate that it should be allocated for small scale residential development.

2. The Surrounding Area

2.1. Great Barford is a settlement and civil parish in Bedfordshire, England, approximately 5 miles northeast of Bedford. The settlement is situated on the River Ouse and is designated a key service centre with a population of 2,003.



Figure 1: Settlement Location

2.2. Great Barford is designated key service centre, which contains a good range of services and is well connected to larger town centres by regular public transport. It provides a strong service role for the local community and surrounding area. The distances to key services and facilities within Great Barford are outlined in the table below:

Local Facilities

Doctors	Primary School	Public House	Village Shop	Post Office	Village Hall	Butchers	Bus Stop
Yes	Yes	Two	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
900m	1000m	450 - 1500m	550m	500m	180m	900m	450m

2.3. The site is situated 550m from the settlements centre, within walking distance to the local facilities.

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- 2.4. Great Barford is located 4km to east of Bedford Town and 5km from Sandy, both of which provide a wide range of further services and facilities typically associated with a town centre.
 - 2.5. Great Barford is in the catchment of Sandy Secondary School, a secondary school which is 14km away in the adjacent settlement of Sandy. A school bus service runs through Great Barford which stops within the settlement.
 - 2.6. The settlement is situated 4.5km from the A1 and therefore sits within the A1 corridor, providing links into London, the Midlands and the North.
 - 2.7. In addition, the site is located 11km from Bedford train station and 8km from Sandy train station, both provide direct routes to London's Kings Cross train station.
 - 2.8. The village is serviced by a range of bus routes, the closest stop being less than a 2-minute walk from the site. This bus stop provides services to Bedford, Milton Keynes, Oxford via the X5, a regular coach service.

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3. The Site

- 3.1. The site is situated in the south western area of Great Barford, accessed off Green End Road, see figure 4 for a site location plan. The site measures approximately 0.7ha in size.



Figure 2: Site Location

- 3.2. The site sits well within the context of existing development with properties from Green End Road directly adjoining the proposed site on its western, eastern and northern boundaries. The current access into the site sits within the Settlement Policy Area, and this designation abuts the site on three sides.

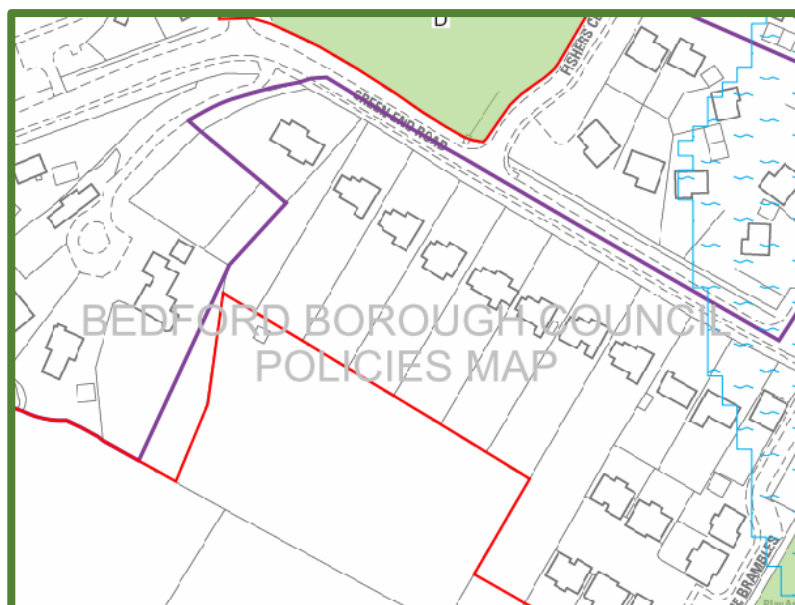


Figure 3: Settlement policy area outlined in red

- 3.3. The northern boundary of the site sits adjacent to the rear gardens of the bungalows on Green End Road. To the east is a strip of residential garden land and beyond this residential development. The southern boundary is lined with trees and beyond this sits open countryside. The western edge of the site, also lined with trees, abuts residential development comprising of large, detached properties.
- 3.4. The topography of the site itself is very flat and the landscape gradually rises away from the settlement.



Figure 4: Topography surrounding site

- 3.5. There are two conservation areas that cover Great Barford, the site sits outside of both.

Potential Constraints

- Flood Zone 1, there is a low probability of flooding
- Residential and agricultural land use abut the site
- Outside the Great Barford Green End conservation area
- There are no heritage assets within the site boundary
- Closest heritage asset Grade II Listed 65 Green End Road 150m to west
- Relatively flat topography
- No public rights of way crossing the site

Current Use

- 3.6. The site has historically been used as a paddock, however, has not been in use for some time. The site is now, vacant and has become a very overgrown, and underused space within a built-up residential area. See figure 5 and 6.
- 3.7. The only buildings onsite are two small sheds in relatively poor condition, one is situated on the northern boundary and one on the western.



Figure 5: Existing Shed



Figure 6: View from site towards existing development

3.8. Surrounding Planning history



Figure 7: Surrounding planning applications

- **Land to the rear of 51 – 53 Green End Road, Great Barford: 14/02194/FUL** – Construction of two new detached dwellings and on detached garage, ancillary parking and shared private access. Approved 10th June 2015.
- **42 Silver Street, Great Barford: 14/02919/FUL** - Demolition of existing bungalow and garage, erection of two 1.5 storey semi-detached houses with attached garages and all ancillary works. Approved 15th February 2015.
- **61 Green End Road, Great Barford: 07/00245/FUL** - Erection of two storey detached dwelling with integral garage. Approved 19th March 2009.
- **33 Green End Road, Great Barford: 07/01523/FUL** - Demolition of 33 Green End Road, formation of new access and erection of 8 no. dwellings with associated external works. Approved 30th October 2007.
- **61 Green End Road, Great Barford: 07/01104/FUL** - Erection of two detached dwellings and associated garages; conversion, alterations and extension of coach house to dwelling and erection of detached double garage for no 61. Approved 6th July 2007.

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4. Access

- 4.1. Vehicular access to the proposed site can be gained from Green End Road to the north, this access is shared with two new-build dwellings.



Figure 8: Location of Access



Figure 9: Existing Shared Access

5. The Proposed Allocation

- 5.1. Optimis propose that this site is allocated for residential development.
- 5.2. The SHELAA assumes that the site is capable of delivering up to 20 dwellings, in addition to providing additional community benefits.
- 5.3. The site relates well to Great Barford as it abuts the Settlement Policy Area on three sites, to the north, east and west. The proposal for the site constitutes infill development between existing residential properties, making its inclusion into the Settlement Policy Area robust in geographical terms.
- 5.4. A revised settlement boundary would also be robust in physical terms due to the contained nature of the site and mature vegetation screening views from the open countryside to the south.
- 5.5. Development here would have minimal impact on the setting of existing heritage assets due to the site's location. Existing development provides sufficient screening from views when entering Great Barford.
- 5.6. The proposed allocation offers an opportunity to make use of vacant overgrown land, providing a continuation of the existing development. Development of this land will enhance the relationship between existing backland development to the west and linear development to the north of the site, strengthening and defining the southern boundary of the settlement.
- 5.7. The proposal includes a variety of house types and designs.
- 5.8. Design cues will be taken from within the local area, ensuring that scale is sympathetic and in keeping with existing development, and respects the Great Barford conservation area.

Proposal Benefits

- 5.9. The proposed development would be able to deliver a range of benefits for the local community. These could possibly include:
- Opportunity to enhance edge of settlement
 - Contribution to community facilities
 - Biodiversity and Ecology benefits

Community Engagement

- 5.10. The client is keen to engage with the Bedford Borough Planning team and the site has been put forwards for consideration to the Great Barford Neighbourhood Planning Group. A Neighbourhood Area Designation was submitted in April 2015 and a Great Barford Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment has been undertaken by AECOM on behalf of the Neighbourhood Planning Group. No pre-submission plan consultation has taken place at this time.
- 5.11. Within the Great Barford Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment this site has been assessed as suitable, available, and deliverable. The following conclusion was stated: *“Despite some heritage constraints, **the site performs well** against the local criteria. As the site is relatively small, **sensitive design would mitigate any potential impacts** on nearby heritage assets”.* **(Our emphasis)**
- 5.12. The landowner is keen to provide a development that is commensurate and meets the needs of the settlement and people of Great Barford. This would include engagement with local people and the Parish Council to establish benefits to be bought forward by the scheme and ensure that the design and housing mix are appropriate.

Availability and Deliverability

- 5.13. The site is considered suitable, deliverable, and available. It relates well to existing development and does not fall into the Great Barford Green End Conservation Area. The site is in close proximity to the settlement centre with good bus links to local town centres and offers the opportunity to create a robust settlement boundary to the south of Great Barford.
- 5.14. Once allocated within the emerging Local Plan, which is predicted to be adopted in 2023, Optimis envisage that this site will be delivered by 2024.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. This site is in a sustainable location with no known constraints and could deliver a sensitive residential development of up to 20 dwellings, alongside benefits to the local community. Optimis advocate that this site should be allocated within the Bedford Borough Local Plan review.
- 6.2. Residential redevelopment of this site will form a natural and logical expansion to Great Barford on a small-scale, commensurate with the existing population.